

8.0 ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

The adaptive management process is an important component of CALFED. Using this process, CALFED will monitor the Bay-Delta ecosystem, carry out management strategies, and conduct additional research. As it receives new information about the Bay-Delta ecosystem, CALFED will be able to determine whether its management prescriptions—including the MSCS conservation measures—are meeting its goals and objectives. CALFED will then have an opportunity to refine those management prescriptions as needed.

For example, if monitoring reveals that certain CALFED actions are not achieving the expected benefits for a species, CALFED will be able to redirect its management prescriptions in a manner to ensure their success. Conversely, if a species reaches its conservation goal before CALFED completes all conservation measures, further conservation efforts may not be necessary.

Adaptive management is a dynamic approach to compliance with endangered species laws and regulations. CALFED goals for NCCP communities and evaluated species are generally expected to remain constant; however, CALFED may refine its specific conservation measures to respond to new information. To ensure that it meets NCCP community and evaluated species goals, CALFED may incorporate new or refined conservation measures or prescriptions.

USFWS, NMFS, and DFG, in consultation with other CALFED agencies, will need to amend or modify the MSCS periodically as information is developed on actions, implementation, and biological monitoring and research. The following elements may change during the 30-year life of the program:

- specific project descriptions;
- implementation status of CALFED actions;
- species status relative to goals, or other biological information that results from research and monitoring (including new listings and delistings);
- species found to be affected by CALFED;
- exceedance of incidental take allowed in biological opinions; and
- prescriptions for achieving “R” and “r” species goals.

Conservation measures do not necessarily have to be modified when new information becomes available, but USFWS, NMFS, and DFG, in consultation with other CALFED agencies, may do so when necessary and appropriate. If necessary, conservation measures could be amended to include additional avoidance, minimization, and compensation or restoration measures, species or habitat monitoring, or completion of research needed to meet species goals.

